mdir, "exiled," in his own words, to the country, must account for a nahiya or sub-district, in this case with an average population of some 10,000 souls, with a staff of a few tax-assessors, clerks, a police detachment and servants which together usually numbers less than 30 or 40 men, less than 1/250th of such a population.

The lot of the typical mudir is not an enviable one. His chief tasks are those of the great trinity of Middle Eastern administration, the maintenance of order, the collection of taxes, and the selection of army recruits. Because these three demand most of his time and energy, other problems, such as public health, must suffer in comparison. The government headquarters is the central village of a nahiya usually a decrepit one-storey outpost of mud-brick or rubble, built about an unpaved courtyard. It contains some offices, a guardroom and quarters for the police, and a primitive jail, and boasts neither plumbing, heating, or electricity. The mudir himself is assigned a house, but he can rarely have more than the minimum in furnishings, just as he usually cannot yet afford marriage. He is most often a younger man from 25 to 35 years of age, a lawyer by training, and in high hopes of some better favoured assignment. Moreover, he finds himself an alien in the community, not only because his origins are elsewhere, but also because his social rank does not seem to admit of free intercourse with those he governs. There are, to be sure, mudirs who take a great part in the social life of their nahiyas, but

ittle collection of arms--rifles, bandoliers, khukiris
he curved Kurdish dagger)--may often be seen, because
n with business in the serai are disarmed on entering
d may reclaim their weapons after their departure. The
ofs are of earth thickly plastered and rolled on supporting
ists of bundled poles and twigs, and on them turfs of
ass have found a foothold. In summer the policemen on
ty at night take up their station in a corner of the
of.

The offices of the serai open on the inner courtyard.
ere are but a few loopholes in the outer wall of the
rst storey, and the interior windows and those of the
cond storey facing the valley are glassed and barred.
e walls within are plastered, but the ceiling consists
bare brushes and poles which support the roof. The
ors are of tamped earth. The furniture--desks, chairs,
d long, high wooden benches--is unpainted, while a few
fices boast upholstered easy-chairs. Desks, desks, and
ore desks are occupied with stacks of dossiers
d loosely-glazed papers. Everything is written by hand,
r there are no typewriters. In the corner of every office
ands the omnipresent grey water-jug with a glass turned
er over its mouth. There is no electric lighting, and
e rare work which demands attention after dark must be done
r kerosene or gasoline lanterns. A few of the rooms are
ipped with stoves in winter time. Directly across the
rtyard from the gateway is the jail, its inner wall

consisting of a large steel grill and its usual fur lining, squatting against the walls, on display. The official day begins at about eight o'clock and continues without interruption until two or three o'clock, although it is often shortened during the hot summer months or the fasting of Ramadan. A number of officials may continue their work after a recess of one or two hours, but for most labor comes to a close in the early afternoon. During the time of business the courtyard is a scene of activity, filled with villagers and townspeople on various errands, policemen going to or from their duties, servants carrying tea or sherbet, and, of course, a scattering of loafers with no business at all.

To the left of the gateway and up a flight of marble stairs may be found the office of the <u>qaimmaqam</u>. It is a typical example of an official's establishment of the Arab Middle East, and may be visited and its ritual repeated again and again. The far wall is decorated with a large framed photograph of the ruler and a map of the area. Beneath it stands the <u>qaimmaqam</u>'s littered desk, flanked with an old-fashioned French cradle-phone. Both side walls are lined with upholstered chairs placed arm to arm. In one corner stands a bookcase enclosing a few pamphlets and, ready for testimony, the Quran in its green-and-white cloth envelope. Before the door a servant officiates, full of self importance and colorfully dressed in native garb. A name or card must be submitted to him, and he disappears

K 534
K 535

resembling the chanter of a bagpipe and has often a pleasant lilt. Kurdish dancing, however, is by no means as strenuous as Scottish. Kurds and all other mountain dwellers in Kurdistan dance what is known as the chain-dance, similar to that which is, I believe, commonly seen in the Balkans. The dancers join hands and form a ring. The piper and a drummer with a sort of tenor drum stand in the middle, and the dance consists of fairly intricate footwork while the circle moves slowly round. Often star dancers who fancy themselves as budding Nijinskys do solo dances inside the circle. Amongst the Kurds the men and women dance separately, but with the Christians often the two sexes dance together. This does not mean, however, that Kurdish women are completely segregated or kept by themselves. As a matter of fact, they possess considerable freedom and may be seen gathering firewood, tending animals or engaged in other tasks on the mountainside, often far from their villages.

K [563]

Up to five years ago the Barzan district of Kurdistan retained all of its savage and primitive features. Government had not penetrated and Shaikh Ahmed, a religious fanatic, was dictator. With the help of his brothers and a standing army of several hundred men he completely dominated the impoverished inhabitants, who had the sheikh's bodyguard perpetually billeted on them and who had to provide them with food, clothing and tobacco and anything else they might fancy. Any protests on the part of the villagers were discouraged by the strongest methods. Such complete ascendancy did Shaikh Ahmed gain over his savage and illiterate people that they began to look upon him as a god and, though Moslems in name, turned their faces towards him in prayer rather than towards Mecca, as tradition demands. There was a Mullah in the district called Mullah Jej, who represented himself to be the prophet of this new god. The Mullah was a very fiery and eloquent speaker and, unfortunately for himself, his fame began to surpass even that of the deity. This could not of course be tolerated, and one of Shaikh Ahmed's brothers "bumped off" the presumptuous prophet. Up to that time the Koran had been revered, but now the Shaikh issued orders for the destruction of all copies to be found. He also withdrew the ban on the eating of pork, for wild pig were plentiful in Barzan. Armed missionaries were sent out beyond the Barzan bounds, and villages which refused to accept the Shaikh were burned and a number of the male inhabitants put to death. This state of affairs could not be allowed to continue, and the 'Iraq Government was forced to take action in conjunction with the British Royal Air Force.

K [613]
K 793
K [634]
K 731
K 697